

Audrey Patterson
DDS Budget
2/23/2017

Thank you to the co-chairs, Senator Osten, Senator Formica, and Representative Walker, and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee.

I, Audrey Patterson am an 1199 member at Tri-County ARC and Network – both are private agency care providers which receive their funding through DDS, which is why I am here to testify in opposition to proposed cuts to DDS in the Governor's budget. I have been working in this profession for the past 27 years. After spending 27 years providing care to individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities I am still forced to work two jobs in order to support myself and my family.

Working two jobs to me says that I don't get time to take care of myself. I live with a medical diagnosis that has no cure and I will have to be on medication for the rest of my life. Since there have been only budget cuts in DDS for the last several years, my health insurance costs have risen dramatically. The cost of my medication this year has doubled from what it was last year. The low wages at both of my jobs means that there are times when I am forced to choose which medications I can afford and when.

If you pass this budget with the proposed budget cuts you will be forcing the employers to abuse their staff by continuing to provide low wages and limited to no benefits. Not increasing the budget for DDS will mean that I will continue to struggle to pay for my medication and to support myself and my family.

Please oppose any proposed cuts to DDS, workers have already made enough sacrifice.